U.S. ARMY CHEMICAL MATERIALS AGENCY www.cma.army.mil

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CMA PROGRESS AT A GLANCE

- Anniston Chemical Activity, Ala., Anniston Chemical Agent Disposal Facility work force has safely processed 82,524 VX-filled 155-mm projectiles and 50,814 gallons of liquid VX since disposal operations resumed in June 2007.
- Deseret Chemical Depot, Utah, Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility has safely disposed of 2,271 mustard agent-filled ton containers and 15,875 mustard agent-filled, 155-mm projectiles as of Jan.27. Mustard operations began in August 2006.
- Newport Chemical Depot, Ind., Newport Chemical Agent Disposal Facility work force has safely neutralized more than 75 percent of the chemical agent VX stored at the Newport Chemical Depot, which is approximately 232,960 gallons.
- Pine Bluff Arsenal, Ark., Pine Bluff Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (PBCDF) has disposed of more than one million pounds of nerve agent and more than 100,000 nerve agent munitions since the start of operations in March 2005. Additionally, PBCDF has eliminated more than 50 percent of the VX rockets, the munitions in its current disposal campaign.

  PBCDF also recently reached a major safety milestone, working more than 10 million consecutive hours without a lost-day-away-from-work occurrence. The Pine Bluff Chemical Activity also reached a major milestone by safely working more than 400,000 hours in one year, without a lost time accident.
- Umatilla Chemical Depot, Ore., Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility destroyed the Umatilla Chemical Depot's final VX spray tank Dec. 24, 2007, which also marked safe disposal of the final spray tank in the U.S. stockpile. The facility resumed VX rocket processing during the last week of December, and on Jan. 6, 2008, safely destroyed 733 rockets in a 24-hour period, the most productive rocket processing day in U.S. chemical demilitarization history.
- Non-Stockpile Chemical Materiel Project's Ton Container Decontamination Facility at Pine Bluff Arsenal (PBA), Ark., continues thermal decontamination of ton containers so they can by recycled. The Pine Bluff Explosive Destruction System continues treatment of recovered chemical warfare materiel at PBA, with more than 75 percent of the items destroyed so far. Work continues on a project to destroy 71 recovered chemical munitions at Schofield Barracks Military Reservation, Hawaii, in support of the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for Environment, Safety and Occupational Health. NSCMP has received a new Mobile Munitions Assessment System, which will be used in the identification of recovered chemical warfare materiel.

CONRAD WHYNE NEW CMA DIRECTOR

CMA Director Conrad Whyne

The new year began with a major change in leadership when Mr. Conrad Whyne officially replaced Mr. Dale Ormond as the director of the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA). The Assumption of Responsibility ceremony was held Jan. 25 at Aberdeen Proving Ground – Edgewood Area, Md.

Mr. Ormond, the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Army for the Elimination of Chemical Weapons, has been serving as the Acting CMA Director since January 2007. Throughout this time CMA has achieved many milestones – a Reportable Injury Rate below 1.0, the shipment of Newport hydrolysate for final disposal, the 45 percent destruction CWC milestone, 50 percent of the original stockpile destroyed, the elimination of VX spray tanks from the U.S. stockpile, the total facility and permit closure of the Aberdeen disposal facility and the successful, complete destruction of all former chemical weapons production facilities.

"I am proud of the CMA work force and their commitment to safe and efficient disposal over the past year," said Mr. Ormond. "Without the dedication of our government and contractor employees, my job – as well as daily CMA operations – would not have gone as smoothly. Mr. Whyne brings more than 20 years of experience and leadership to this position and I am confident that he will succeed in leading CMA through many more crucial milestones."

As the incoming director of CMA, Mr. Whyne will ensure continued secure storage and safe destruction of chemical weapons materiel, manage the closure of the demilitarization facilities, oversee the Chemical Stockpile Emergency Preparedness Program and plan for Base Realignment and Closure requirements.

Accepting his new position, Mr. Whyne said, "I am honored to lead the committed men and women of CMA. In my 24 years working for CMA, I have witnessed the unfailing dedication of these individuals to safely storing and ultimately eliminating our former chemical warfare program. I look forward to upholding CMA's remarkable safety and environmental standards."

U.S. ARMY ELIMINATES SPRAY TANK STOCKPILE

The U.S. stockpile of chemical agent-filled spray tanks is no more. On December 26, 2007, the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) officially announced the safe destruction of the last VX nerve agent-filled spray tank at Umatilla Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (UMCDF) in Umatilla, Ore., marking the total elimination of spray tanks from the U.S. stockpile. UMCDF completed its spray tank demilitarization campaign on Monday, Dec. 24, one month after the campaign began. A large part of the national spray tank stockpile had previously been eliminated at the Tooele Chemical Agent Disposal Facility (TOCDF) in Utah.

The TMU-28 VX nerve agent spray tanks were bulk containers designed to distribute the liquid agent in an aerosol form (as a fog or mist) from an aircraft onto battlefields. These tanks held up to 160 gallons of VX nerve agent, and were created as a countermeasure against similar Soviet weapons during the Cold War. The U.S. military never used the VX spray tanks, or any other chemical nerve agent weapons, in combat.

Spray tank disposal operations first began at TOCDF on July 23, 2004. Out of the 1,018 original stockpile spray tanks, TOCDF was responsible for the disposal of all 862 tanks stored at Deseret Chemical Depot. On Nov. 23, 2007, UMCDF began to safely destroy the 156 remaining spray tanks, which were stored at the Umatilla Chemical Depot. As no other types of agent-filled tanks were produced, the final VX spray tank's destruction on Dec. 24 signifies the end of one more potentially lethal weapon in the United States—a good end to 2007 and a great start to the new year.

TO JACADS AND BACK

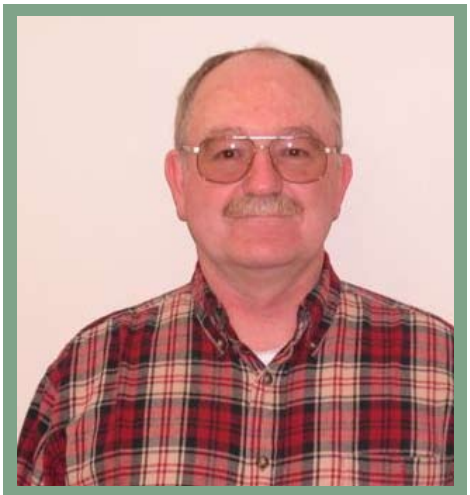
Many of the workers at the U.S. Army Chemical Materials Agency (CMA) chemical demilitarization sites gained their original on-the-job training and experience far away, on a remote island in the Pacific Ocean. These workers trained at the nation's first fully-integrated and functional demilitarization site, the Johnston Atoll Chemical Agent Disposal System (JACADS). JACADS was the first chemical incineration system to complete destruction of its stockpile of weapons and agents and the first chemical agent disposal system to complete remediation of the site where it had been located.

Having been part of the success at JACADS, many maintenance and operations personnel are now at other chemical demilitarization sites sharing lessons learned from JACADS. Some of these employees are highly trained and qualified to handle hazardous materiel and share their knowledge from site to site. One employee, Richard Wingard, worked at JACADS for eight years and has since moved back to his home town, Pine Bluff, Ark. where he is an Implementation and Control Supervisor at the Pine Bluff Agent Disposal Facility or PBCDF.

Wingard started out professionally by attending four years of electrician school. Upon graduation, he worked as an electrician for 15 years in Pine Bluff. During this time, Richard's neighbor told him about upcoming work at Raytheon Demilitarization Company (the systems contractor at JACADS). Wingard started with Raytheon in 1992 and was immediately sent to JACADS to begin his on-the-spot training.

Regarding training at JACADS, Wingard says, "They (CMA) were cycling people through JACADS on-the-spot training in the beginning, but wanted to make sure people would stay there to work. When I signed on to work at JACADS, there was a 60 percent turnover rate of people who left within a year. By the time I left JACADS, there was a 5 percent turnover rate."

Wingard's time at JACADS was briefly interrupted in 1994 when Hurricane John moved through the Pacific Ocean. The storm led to the evacuation and temporary closing of JACADS, but had minimal effects on Hawaii and Johnston Island. During this time that the facility was closed, he spent eight weeks undergoing more training at the Chemical Demilitarization Training Facility (CDTF) at Aberdeen Proving Ground–Edgewood Area, Md. At the CDTF, he gained experience from a mixture of classroom instruction and hands-on exercises, all taught in an environment without chemical agents. CDTF training is based on the performance of selected job criteria and designed to help students easily transfer skills to the demilitarization sites. Courses are continually evaluated to ensure accuracy and effectiveness, and revised as the work force and work processes evolve. Wingard learned specific areas of disposal training such as multipurpose demilitarization machines, rocket process lines and land mine process lines.



"JACADS really set me up for success here."

– Richard Wingard

Since JACADS was the model for other demilitarization sites yet to start, safety was the main priority. "I think the best way to describe the safety precautions taken at JACADS (and now at PBCDF) is with one of our program acronyms," Wingard says. "STAR—Stop, Think, Act, Review. Stop and think about what you are about to do. Act according to our procedures and safety guidelines. If there is not a procedure to cover the work, then get guidelines from safety and engineering. Review the work to see if it can be done safer and more efficiently."

When his eight weeks of training at the CDTF were up, Wingard went back to the Pacific. His work schedule at JACADS was one month of nights–12 hours each night—and one month of days—12 hours during the day—as an electrical and instrument technician.

On Johnston Island, Wingard learned that privacy was a luxury. "I did not have a family then and depending on what building you ended up in, most of the living arrangements were small. Most were more military-barrack style, or dormitories. There was not a lot of privacy."

Despite the close quarters, Wingard enjoyed his eight years on the island, picking up a few hobbies in his spare time. "I was able to start hobbies that I could not do at home such as deep sea fishing and scuba diving."

When asked what lessons learned from JACADS could be carried to the other sites, Wingard replied, "My experience taught me that most of the original design at JACADS was the model for the design at other sites. At PBCDF, we understand many of the problems we might encounter and what we have to do in order to get those problems resolved. We also use identical equipment and the same personal protective equipment. The hours at PBCDF are also 12-hour shifts. JACADS really set me up for success here."

Looking back on his time with CMA, Wingard fondly remembers why he remains committed to chemical weapons disposal. "My job is constantly changing—there is always something new and everything has a little bit of a twist. The work is not repetitive but if something comes up that we have encountered before, I have been trained well enough in my 15 years to know how to handle most situations."

JACADS was a prototype integrated chemical weapons disposal facility hailed as a "major accomplishment" by CMA and recognized as such by partners within the Army as well as program oversight agencies such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Research Council, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. It has since served as a model for all U.S. chemical agent incineration disposal facilities. Thanks to the hard work and commitment from employees like Richard Wingard, CMA's long-standing tradition of excellence lives on at chemical demilitarization sites in Alabama, Arkansas, Indiana, Oregon and Utah, ensuring the ultimate elimination of the nation's chemical weapons is in experienced and safe hands.

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